Bird Flu

1153. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:
SHRI ANAND SHARMA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a threat of bird flu in the country;

(b) what steps have been taken to face this disease;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India does not have sufficient stocks of influenza vaccines; and

(d) the steps proposed for the production and availability of Avian Flu Vaccine in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) World Health Organization (WHO) has issued an alert that Bird Flu could spread to India and other countries from the very first time that the current outbreak of Avian Influenza Virus (H5N1) was first detected in the republic of Korea in December, 2003.

No case of Bird Flu (Avian Influenza) has been reported in India either in humans or birds.

However, Government of India took adequate measures to prevent entry of Avian Influenza in to India and to contain the disease if it has to happen in poultry or humans. The measures instituted are:

- A joint Monitoring Group under the Chairemanship of Director General of Health Services consisting members from Indian Council of Medical Research, National Institute of Communicable Diseases, World Health Organization and Department of Animal Husbandry is monitoring the situation ever since the WHO alerted the global community and advising appropriate actions to the Government.
- The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries has prepared and circulated an Action Plan for State Animal Husbandry Departments in respect of Bird Flu for taking action in case of suspicion of outbreak of the disease and also in the event of outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). A conference of the State Secretaries of Animal Husbandry was held regarding preparedness in case of outbreak of the disease.

- Department of Animal Husbandry has intensified surveillance and disease intelligence. Samples so far tested at High Security Animal Disease Laboratory (HSADL), Bhopal were found negative. Training has been imparted to the staff of the State Wildlife and the Animal Husbandry Department, how to collect and dispatch the samples to the laboratory for testing.
- There is a total ban in place against import of poultry and poultry related products from all countries affected with bird flu outbreak. Even birds [grand parent stock of poultry etc.] imported from highly pathogenic avian influenza free countries are subjected to quarantine and screening.
- Department of Environment and Forests has issued instructions to all their Wild Life Wardens to keep a watch on death of migratory birds in identified water bodies. Any unusual death among migratory birds would immediately be brought to the notice of Dept. of Animal Husbandry.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is regularly reviewing the situation. A National Consultation Meeting on Pandemic Preparedness was held on 1st August, 2005 with all stakeholders to finalize pandemic preparedness and Response Plan.
- A contingency plan for managing human cases of avian influenza has been finalized detailing immediate action to be taken to deal with any suspected outbreak. The state level action plan has been discusses with the State Govts.
- The components of the action plan such as hospital strengthening, Influenza Surveillance Network, Laboratory strengthening in terms of bio-safety labs, personal protective equipments, stockpiling of drugs and Information Education Communication are being taken up in a phased manner.
- An inter Ministerial Task force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary (H&FW) to ensure availability of drugs, vaccines and all other aspects for management of avian influenza in the country.
- National Institute of Communicable Diseases has been identified as the nodal agency for monitoring avian influenza and for investigating outbreaks. Under the aegis of ICMR, an Human Influenza surveillance network has been operationalized.

- The situation has also been reviewed by Committee of Secretaries on a monthly basis and Ministry of Home Affairs.

There is no vaccine for Avian Flu [H5N1] either for humans or birds. Seasonal influenza vaccine is available but it has no role in either preventing human cases of avian influenza [H5N1] or the pandemic strain which may evolve in future.

Denial Of emergency service To CGHS beneficiaries

1154. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware that certain recongnized hospitals in the Capital have since stopped the facility of entertaining the pensioners and C.G.H.S. beneficiaries at the time of visiting the hospitals for emergency treatment; and

(b) If so, what are the reasons therefore and what remedial steps Government propose to taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) No such complaints regarding stoppage of attending CGHS beneficiaries by CGHS recognised private hospitals for emergency treatement have been received.

(b) The question does not arise.

Global action plan to control Bird Flu

1155. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an international Conference on bird flu has identified key components of a global action plan to control avian influenza in animals and simultaneously limit the threat of a human influenza pandemic;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of cases reported in India so far, relating to bird flu; and

(d) the steps taken by Governiemnt to contain the disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (d) A